

Pre predatory Lending legislation advances

(TRENTON) -- The Senate has given final approval to legislation Assemblymen Jeff Van Drew and Craig Stanley sponsored to combat predatory lending practices that are increasingly forcing needy senior citizens and urban residents into bankruptcy or out of their homes.

"Predatory lenders push unsuspecting homeowners into loans with excessive interest rates, hidden charges and fees, and absolutely unrealistic payment schedules," said Van Drew (D-Cape May). "These mortgage financing scams are nothing short of legalized loan sharking and, alarmingly, they are on the rise."

The bill (A-75) would prohibit certain abusive lending practices commonly known as "predatory lending." This act occurs when unscrupulous creditors target desperate homeowners for loans that contain hidden charges and high costs exceeding a borrower's ability to make payments or retire the loan.

The measure was part of the "Advocating for Consumers" legislative package compiled by Assembly Speaker Albio Sires. Other measures in the package would combat "virtual casinos" on the Internet, make cigarettes less accessible to youths, and protect tenants and their security deposits from unscrupulous landlords.

Essentially, predatory lenders reap substantial profits by exploiting unwary customers who lack comparative shopping skills or who are facing financial difficulties because of medical bills, property tax payments, or home repair costs.

"Predatory lending has a damaging effect on poorer neighborhoods by undercutting revitalization efforts, undermining community stability and promoting poverty," said Stanley (D-Essex). "It's time to end reverse redlining -- this new form of racial profiling,

See PREDATORY page 5

War against Iraq Showcases Top Black Leadership

By: George E. Curry

DOHA, Qatar--If United States Supreme Court justices want know how affirmative action works before ruling in the Michigan cases pending before them, they should visit the Army base here, the place where the war against Iraq is being coordinated.

Everyone on this side of Mars knows by now that daily briefings are conducted by U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks, an African-American. His is the official voice and face of the war, the person who conducts daily briefings that are beamed around the world.

Brooks is not just a pretty face for the Army, he also is deputy director of operations. And there are times when he sounds more like a warrior than a government spokesman. As he said at a briefing Sunday, "...Any piece of the regime that's out there, or any piece of this force that supports the regime, will be attacked, it will

be destroyed..."

The general is not the only African-American on the base. In fact, they hold positions at every level, from the general standing at the podium to the private sitting on the floor placing the microphone in front of reporters as they ask questions.

As journalists approach Camp As Sayliyah, the Army base on the outskirts of this capital city, one of the two MPs on duty is likely to be an African-American. After walking uphill to the check-in point, one is often greeted by the smiling face of Army Spec. Julia Simpkins, a Brooklyn, N.Y., native who escorts journalists to the Central Command Media Center.

And before Brooks enters the room like a recently-launched cruise missile, the entire media operation has been supervised by Army Lt. Col. Ray Shepherd, director of public affairs.

Other Blacks move in and out of the briefing room as Pvt.



U.S. Army Brig. Gen Vincent Brooks at briefing session

Lizaro Myers of Philadelphia squats on the floor, usually out of the sight of cameras, holding his long microphone.

Shepherd says, "We're everywhere."

That certainly applies to Sgt. Maj. Dwight J. Brown. He was at the briefing on Sunday, but by Monday he had left for Afghanistan. Sergeant major is the highest rank an enlisted soldier can reach, and as Command Sgt. Major, Brown is responsible for enlisted soldiers sprawled over 25 countries,

including Iraq, Kuwait, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

During oral arguments in the affirmative action cases before the Supreme Court, Justice Antonin Scalia said if the University of Michigan is so interested in diversity, it should lower its standards. Of course, university officials reminded Scalia that the institution does not need to lower its standards in order to attain a diverse student body.

See LEADERSHIP page 5

An Inside Look at the University of Michigan's Admissions Process clarifies admission myths

By: George E. Curry

Robert Woodson Sr., a prominent Black conservative, and I were debating the merits of affirmative action on a Washington, D.C., television station recently when Woodson went ballistic. He said it was outrageous that the University of Michigan awards more points for a person's color than to an applicant with a perfect SAT score.

On the surface, it appears that Woodson had a valid point. But appearances can be deceiving and Woodson's charge provides a textbook example of that. Not only did he misrepresent the admissions process at the university, which is being challenged in the U.S. Supreme Court, he demonstrated an appalling lack of knowledge about how college administrators select students.

First, let's deal with

Woodson's charge. Unlike the law school, undergraduate schools at Michigan use a point system to evaluate applicants. The maximum score is 150 points, with the overwhelming majority of those related to academics.

Opponents such as Woodson like to point out that African-Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans are automatically awarded 20 points because they are members of underrepresented groups on campus. As Woodson states, a person with a perfect SAT or ACT score receives a maximum of 12 points for that accomplishment under this system.

What Woodson fails to acknowledge is that the University of Michigan correctly assigns a low priority to standardized test results and places a greater emphasis on grade point averages. For example, a students with a straight-A aver-

age is awarded 80 points—more than seven times the points given top SAT and ACT scorers and four times those awarded to people of color. Even a student with a C average receives 40 points.

There are two areas that tend to favor White applicants. If the student graduates from what officials consider a strong school, two to 10 points can be added to the score. The strength of the school's curriculum is also evaluated. If it is deemed weak, up to four points can be subtracted from a student's points. If it is judged strong, eight additional points can be gained.

Inasmuch as most African-American students at Michigan come from what the university considers weak inner-city Detroit schools, a typical White suburban student can have an 18- to 22-point edge. That alone would more than offset the 20

points assigned to students of color.

What galls me about critics of the program is that they deliberately tell only part of the story. The university, which has spent more than \$10 million defending its race-conscious admissions process, freely admits that it awards 20 points to underrepresented groups.

Critics never mention that 20 points are also given to any applicant from a socio-disadvantaged group. That means a poor White person is just as entitled to 20 points as a person of color. No students can collect 20 points for being in more than one category.

Also receiving an automatic 20 points are scholarship athletes. Neither Bob Woodson nor his buddies express outrage over this fact. And they never discuss a provision that allows

See ADMISSIONS page 12



Employee of the Month, Detective Stephanie Treadwell is congratulated by Mayor Sharpe James.

Congratulations

Stephanie Treadwell, "March 2003" Employee of the Month Department of Police Police Gang Intelligence Unit, is an expert on gangs and gives presentations on their activities in Newark and nationwide. These presentations are given to all ages and contain useful information on how to prevent gang activity and keep youth away from the gang lifestyle. "Detective Treadwell believes, all children should be given positive alternatives and choices. She is an important team member in our holistic approach to Newark's gang problems," said Mayor James.

Day For the Champions- Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. center, presented proclamations and trophies to the MalcolmX Shabazz High School Girls Basketball Team for winning the 15th Annual Tournament of Champions and the Bloomfield Tech Boys Basketball Team for winning the Group I State championship.

With DiVincenzo are: from left, Captains Princess Porter and Shondarae Gordon and Head Coach Vanessa Watson from Shabazz; and Captain Courtney Nelson and Head Coach Nick Marinello from Bloomfield Tech.



Photo by Glen Frieson



Former Board of Public Utilities chairman Herbert Tate congratulates his grandmother, Hortense Tate (104 years-old) on being named Woman of the Year by the Essex County Board of Freeholders

Photo by Glen Frieson

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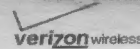
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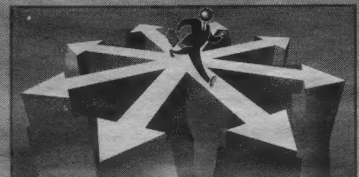
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New Jersey has lost 16,000 jobs since Bush took office

State has lost 0.40% of its total workforce in just two years.

According to a new report, New Jersey has lost 16,000 jobs since President George W. Bush took office. Specifically the report released by the House Appropriations Committee Democrats used Department of Labor data to compare the total workforce of New Jersey in January of 2001 versus the total workforce in December of 2002. In January of 2001, New Jersey's workforce stood at 4,025,000, while in December of 2002 it stands at only 4,009,000 - a loss of 16,000 jobs, or 0.40% of the state's total workforce.

Nationally, the United States has lost more than 1.7 million jobs since Bush took office. While Bush has claimed that September 11th has created the unemployment crisis, Labor Department data show that almost 500,000 jobs were lost in just the six months between the time Bush signed his tax cut and the terrorist attacks, meaning the Bush Recession was well underway before 9/11. Overall, the economy has shed an average of 73,400 jobs per month since Bush was inaugurated - the worst rate in the last two decades.

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Coalition Troops take Iraq Capital

DOHA, Qatar—With dramatic video images streaming out of Baghdad showing jubilant residents dancing in the streets and toppling statues of Saddam Hussein, U.S. officials have finally acknowledged that they have removed the dictator from power.

"The capital city has been added to those places where the regime has lost control," Army Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks said at his daily briefing here. Brooks' remarks were made as graphic footage, reminiscent of the fall of the Berlin Wall, began flowing out of the capital city of Iraq.

"It has now been 20 days since the coalition forces entered Iraq with clear objectives," Brooks noted. "Today, the regime is in disarray and much of Iraq is free from years of oppression."

The whereabouts of Hussein and his relatives is still uncertain and officials are uncertain whether he is still alive after a recent bombing attack of a Baghdad neighborhood.

Meanwhile, Vice President Dick Cheney, speaking at the convention of the American Society of Newspaper Editors in New Orleans, teased early critics of the Bush administration's war plan.

"In the early days of the war, the plan was criticized by some retired military officers embedded in TV studios," Cheney quipped. "But with every day and every advance by our coalition forces, the wisdom of that plan became more apparent."

At his daily briefing here, Gen. Brooks displayed his soulful sense of humor.

A reporter asked, "General, the dancing in the streets that

we've seen, is it because they love you or is it because they fear you? And if it's because they love you, how do you make sure that the love remains?"

Without missing a beat, a smiling Brooks replied, "Well, I'm feeling a lot of love in here right now, so I appreciate the question." His response drew laughter.

On a more serious note, the general continued: "I think the reality is it's not about us, it's about the regime. What you're seeing as celebration in the streets is a recognition that the regime is gone and will not return again. It can never be returned to what was. That's what they're seeing. What it tells us is, thus far our efforts have been successful in those areas. It also tells us that we have more work to do to ensure that's the scene throughout the country."

Television cameras captured the euphoric scene in Baghdad as thousands of singing and chanting Iraqi citizens poured out of their homes into the streets. When one downtown statue of Hussein was toppled, it was dragged through the streets with one person sitting on the head.

Although U.S. and British troops were clearly in control of downtown Baghdad, Gen. Brooks warned that American troops and their allies still face danger.

"There are still pockets," he said. "We haven't located every leader of the regime. We haven't found every instrument of the regime. And so those operations continue."

As he had done earlier, Brooks paid tribute to the soldiers who died during the three-week war.



"In the course of the campaign, young men and women have sacrificed their lives for this cause, and we continue to remember them and their families," he said.

Brooks said the United States has not developed any more information on prisoners of war or those classified as missing in action but pledged to continue searching for them.

Despite widespread predictions that African-Americans would not suffer disproportionate casualties during the war, figures compiled thus far show the opposite.

According to the Pentagon, although African-Americans are only 12 percent of the 18 to 44 year-old population, they make up 22 percent of the armed forces.

In early January, Maj. Sandra Troeber, a spokesperson for the Department of Defense, told NNPA News Service Washington Correspondent Hazel Trice Edney that African-Americans were unlikely to carry an undue burden because they tend to be concentrated in administrative and support jobs.

However, the death figures don't support that assertion.

On Newsday.com, the Web site of the well-respected Long Island, N.Y., newspaper, is one of the largest collections of photos of the dead. According to the most recent figures compiled by the Associated Press, 98 Americans have lost their lives in the war on Iraq.

Of those identified, 17 of the 98—or slightly less than 18 percent—are African-Americans. However, the percentage is probably higher than that because photographs were not posted for 11 of the deceased.

Two of the 15 believed captured or missing—Army Spec. Shoshana Johnson of El Paso, Texas and Marine PFC Tamarlo Burkett of Buffalo, N.Y.—are Black.

Former Army Secretary Togo D. West Jr. never accepted the proposition that African-Americans would not suffer heavy losses. He told Edney, "...Wherever they are, whether it's support, combat or not, if they're going, they're going in greater percentages than their White counterparts."

As military units seek to solidify their hold on Iraq, efforts are underway to mend a diplomatic rift.

On Wednesday, British Prime Minister Tony Blair spoke with French President Jacques Chirac and Russian President Vladimir Putin about assisting in stabilizing Baghdad. The two leaders, who opposed the war, are expected to be a part of a larger role expected the United Nations would play in the post-Hussein era.

In his briefing, Brooks made it clear that Iraq has indeed entered a new era.

"I think we are at a degree of a tipping point," he said. "For the population there's a broader recognition that this regime is coming to an end and will not return in the way that it has been in the past."

Even Iraq's ambassador to the United Nations had to agree.

As he was leaving his New York residence, Mohammed Al-Dour told reporters, "The game is over," referring to the war. "And I hope the peace will prevail. I hope the Iraqi people will have a happy life."

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Each week, CITY NEWS helps to preserve the struggles, achievements, issues and dreams of black people for the annals of history, linking the past and future, helping to pave the way for a better tomorrow.

Editorial

Financial Literacy Gets \$100 Million

US Senator Jon S. Corzine hosted his first annual financial literacy summit to bring together educators, bankers, business people, consumer advocates, government and community leaders to discuss financial literacy for adults and children. The prime sponsor of the literacy legislation in the Senate, he is convinced that "financial literacy is about economic security."

To his credit he has written legislation authorizing financial literacy programs in high schools, and sponsored legislation seeking to create community-based financial literacy programs for seniors and for working men and women nearing retirement. Similar legislation is also being sponsored to establish literacy programs for men and women moving from welfare to work.

The Education Reform Act, amended by the Senator and passed by the Congress last year, includes financial literacy programs so children can learn about savings, checking accounts, debit cards, credits cards and credit card debt. The Youth Literacy Act authorizes \$100 million to provide grants to states to help develop and implement financial education programs in elementary and secondary schools.

We applaud the Senator for taking the bull by the horns to push this important initiative. However, given the tragic record of elementary and secondary schools, in the urban centers of educating children period, many of whom are under educated and lacking basic reading and writing skills, we ask that fiscal and performance accountability literacy is required of all whom receive funds in the interest of helping the "financially restricted" become "financially literate."

We want your comments and letters. Send your correspondence to: City News Opinion, 111 Mulberry St. Townhouse C, Newark, NJ 07102. You can also email your comments to: Editorial@citynewsnetwork.com

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The (Il-)logic of Bush's Doctrine of Preemptive Strikes

By. Bill Fletcher Jr.

It happened at Washington, D.C.'s Dupont Circle. Driving to work on snow-filled and icy streets, I stopped at a red light on the traffic circle. I allowed enough space between my car and the car immediately ahead just to be on the safe side. I suddenly realized that the person in the car behind me was yelling and honking. I rolled down my window to hear him insist that I move my car forward so that he could pass on my right and head north on Connecticut Avenue. I complied and moved my car forward. The driver, a young White man probably in his late 20s/early 30s, pulled up on my right, stopped, and face turning red, yelled: "You stupid, fuckin, n-word!!!" He then drove off.

I sat there for a second, and then when the light turned green I proceeded. But I drove off feeling stunned. I am neither young nor naïve. I am well aware of racism, and experience it regularly. What struck me was

the anger and virulence in this young man. What did "n-word" have to do with not moving my car forward quickly enough? What made him think that in Washington he could make such a statement given the demographics of this city?

Reflecting on that incident I started thinking, ironically enough, about President Bush's notion of preemptive action against nation-states that allegedly threaten the United States. If I were to use Bush's logic, then I probably should have eliminated this White driver. After all, he was threatening. He posed and continues to pose a potential threat to me and certainly to other Black people in Washington. Should he ever get hold of a weapon (unless he already has one) he might kill or attempt to kill a Black person.

Using the rationales that have led to this war with Iraq, I would be within my rights to take action, up to and including killing him, in order to guarantee my future safety. I would not need

proof of what he intended to do. All I would need would be an ability to judge from his rhetoric and actions what he might do at some future moment.

The reality is that no civilized nation would permit me or anyone else to take such actions, particularly on such a basis. Taking preemptive measures against an individual for what they might do in the future if and when they have the opportunity would throw us into a state of barbarism.

Yet this is precisely what the Bush administration has done at the international level. If one steps back and considers everything that has been offered as pretexts for attacking Iraq, it essentially comes down to what an evil leader might do in the future if he has the opportunity and the resources. Using that logic, one could conclude that virtually every country on this planet poses a potential threat. If a neo-fascist group takes control of Germany, they might decide to annex Austria. If an

extreme nationalist group takes control of Russia, they might use Russia's arsenal of weapons of mass destruction against some opponent. If a pig had wings it could fly. The list goes on and on.

Rather than offer a clear, objective analysis, the Bush administration has used exaggeration, half-truths and questioning one's patriotism to frighten US citizens into supporting this aggressive adventure. Instead of engaging in international diplomacy, the administration has used bullying and spurious arguments to craft what it calls a "coalition of the willing"—but what would more accurately be termed a rogues gallery for the purpose of conducting this war. In the course of this, the lives of our friends and relatives—not to mention the lives of the people of Iraq—have been put on the line. And, by flirting with barbarism, we at home find ourselves further from any sense of security than we have ever been since Sept. 11.

A Case of Racial Restitution or "Diversity?"

By. Ron Walters

Elaine Jones is brilliant. She is head of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, one of our sharpest legal spears in many of the cases that have been fought to secure our rights. At a recent town hall meeting at Howard University Law School, she lamented the fact that the U.S. Supreme Court would not give the fund time on April 1 to argue its case supporting affirmative action. The reason was interesting. The issue was the University of Michigan's argument about the virtues of something called "diversity."

Don't get me wrong, I approve of diversity, the theory that race should be permitted to serve as an admission criteria where all of the colors of the rainbow are represented in American institutions, that this rainbow defines the meaning of democracy, and that it is a requisite of the future economic viability of America as the White population declines. I understand and appreciate those arguments.

Jones reminded us that there is a growing erosion in this theory of affirmative action as racial restitution. Affirmative action was based on the crime of slavery and other forms of overt racial subordination, and it called

attention to the necessity of the nation to atone for this by enacting a regime of law that would give Black people opportunities in obtaining employment, business contracts and higher education. She reminded us that some universities have subtly changed their language from affirmative action to diversity because they fear being sued by Right-wing organizations, such as the Center for Individual Rights, the organization representing the plaintiffs in the Michigan cases. She also pointed out that if the fund were allowed to argue the validity of affirmative action, the court would require a finding that the institution had previously practiced racial discrimination and exclusion. And many institutions of higher education do not want to go through the documentation of that historical fact, not only because of the embarrassment it would cause, but because it might open them to other kinds of legal action.

The University of Michigan practiced racial exclusion for 50 years after it opened. For example, what happened to the taxes Black residents paid during those years, in a state that doesn't have, like some in the South, a robust system of Black institutions of higher education as an alternative? Blacks were excluded from White, SAT and other standardized

colleges like the University of Michigan.

What that says to me is that we must be prepared, no matter what the Supreme Court decides, to continue to bring cases to the attention of the public about the special history and condition of Black people which has resulted in exclusion from many American political and economic institutions.

Ironically, this is what the reparations movement is doing. Reparations activists are bringing suit against corporations and the U.S. government based on the reality that the deficit which was constructed between the races was a result of the brutalization of Black life and the appropriation of our resources in the building of America. The problem, however, with the reparations thrust may be that its frontal assault on the system may be too much to take: too much pain, too much embarrassment, too much history-too much owed.

So maybe there is another way, one stronger than "diversity" but still focused on restoring dignity to Black life and access to opportunity. One way may be to attack and attempt to dismantle as illegal the infrastructure that allows Whites to benefit from unequal access to opportunities. Attack the SAT and the

tests; attack the legality of other forms of admission such as alumni legacies and geographical admits as a violation of Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Another Right-wing organization, The Institute for Constitutional Rights headed by Linda Chavez, asserts that Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination in the use of federal funds. Well what kind of discrimination—only race? If that is true—and I doubt it—why don't legacy admits, geographical admits and similar preferences also violate Title VI?

We should all remember that "diversity" can exclude or marginalize Blacks and that in some places, other people of color are the preferred minorities. So, with the increasing multicultural nature of America, while joining hands with others, we could also loose our own place if we cease to struggle for it.

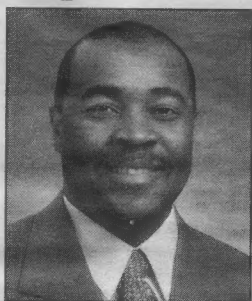
Ron Walters is Distinguished Leadership Scholar, director of the African American Leadership Institute and professor of government and politics at the University of Maryland-College Park. His most recent book is "African American Leadership," with Robert Smith.

Newest Member of P&G's Global Leadership Council

CINCINNATI — As vice president of Information Technology at Procter & Gamble and the newest member of the company's powerful Global Leadership Council (GLC), Robert Dixon has a message for young minorities who aspire to be corporate executives.

"Stay in school and pursue a college education, and take those challenging Math, Science and Literature courses," he said. "Pursue technical degrees like Engineering, Information Technology and Life Sciences that will give rise to new technologies 10 years out."

As a member of the GLC, a team of top executives who run worldwide businesses, geographic units, and corporate



Robert Dixon

functions, Dixon uses the Internet to build information systems that help P&G supply products to grocery store shelves fast and reliably. He's the company's first African-American appointed to the GLC.

Tips for taxpayers

Each year, the April 15th deadline for filing tax returns seems to arrive far too quickly. With so much going on in the world this tax season, it is easy to understand how filing a tax return might not be the top priority on many peoples' minds.

Still, the deadline is approaching. Jackson Hewitt suggests there are a few simple things worth reminding taxpayers in advance of April 15th.

Avoid silly mistakes Some errors many taxpayers make are simple and avoidable. Make sure all the social security numbers are correct on the return, report all Form W-2's and Form 1099s received, double-check your math, sign your return (and have your spouse sign if applicable), mail the return to the correct address, and mail it on time.

If you owe an amount and are paying by check, a common mistake is to make the check payable to "IRS." Make sure you make out the check to "United States Treasury."

Report all sources of income The IRS matches the amounts you show on your return with amounts that have been reported to the IRS on Form W-2s, and Form 1099s. If they do not match, you can expect to receive a notice. If the amounts were wrong, and you cannot get a corrected version from the issuer in time to file your tax return, enter the reported amount, make an adjustment to get to the correct amount, and attach the explanation for this adjustment to your tax return.

If you owe money consider electronic funds withdrawal

or pay by credit card If paying by credit card, be aware you may be charged a fee for this service, and if you do not pay the balance when due, an additional finance charge. If you owe money but cannot pay, consider an IRS installment plan.

If you need more time You can get an automatic four-month extension of time to file, not an extension of time to pay, by completing Form 4868 and sending it by April 15th. This is an extension of time to file, not an extension of time to pay any taxes you may owe. You will be charged interest on any tax you owe but did not pay by April 15th. You may also be charged penalties in certain cases.

Jackson Hewitt is the nation's fastest growing tax preparation service

War against Iraq Showcases Top Black Leadership

Continued from page 1

If Scalia comes here, he will see that the Army didn't lower its standards to produce quality leadership.

This \$110 million facility, built less than five years ago, has allowed the military to cut normal troop deployment from four weeks during the Gulf War to four days in the current war. There are 27 warehouses, with approximately 1.6 million square feet or 36.3 acres of enclosed storage space. It takes that kind of room to house 150 Abrams M-1 tanks, 116 Bradley fighting vehicles and 112 armored personnel carriers.

The men and weapons here have been deployed to perhaps the most turbulent region in the world. And African-Americans have been entrusted to operate at the highest level, as far as their

talent would take them.

CENTCOM—the Army's way of saying U.S. Central Command—normally operates out of Tampa, Fla. But during this war, the leaders set up headquarters here, a major jumping-off point for men and women headed to battle. And it's no accident that African-Americans hold such prominent positions.

After Scalia and company visit Qatar, they should return to Washington and re-read the friend-of-the-court brief filed by more than 25 distinguished military leaders.

Vouching for the effectiveness of affirmative action were Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of the first Gulf War; three former chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—Adm. William Crowe, Gen. Hugh Shelton and Gen. John M.

Shalikashvili—former Defense secretaries William Perry and William Cohen, along with former superintendents of the U.S. military and Air Force academies.

"Doing affirmative action the right way is deadly serious for us—people's lives depend on it," the military leaders said in their brief. Dismissing so-called race-neutral approaches to diversity such as percentage plans, they noted: "There is presently no workable alternative to limited race-conscious programs to increase the pool of qualified minority officer candidates and establish diverse educational settings for officer candidates."

Because the military is more integrated than most sectors of American society, it's easy to forget that it wasn't always that way.

As late as 1968, Black enrollment at the Naval Academy at Annapolis and West Point was less than 1 percent. In 1973, although African-Americans made up 17 percent of the rank-and-file, they constituted only 2.8 percent of all military officers.

By 2001, Blacks and Hispanics made up 11 percent of West Point, 14 percent of the Air Force Academy and 15 percent at Annapolis. Today, people of color represent 40 percent of the military and 20 percent of all officers.

Brig. Gen. Brooks is a graduate of West Point. He did something there that no African-American had ever accomplished—he finished first in his class. When you see him on TV, he is still standing at the head of the class.

Even affirmative action foes Clarence Thomas, who was admitted to Yale Law School as a result of affirmative action, and Scalia should not miss that point.

If they do, maybe we can get Col. Jerry Robinson, the Black chaplain here from Baconton, Ga., to pray for them.

Predatory Lending legislation advances

Continued from page 1

With this bill, we can put predatory lending in check and ensure that the American dream of home ownership does not become a nightmare for the needy and disenfranchised."

If enacted, New Jersey would join North Carolina, Georgia, and New York in establishing strong anti-predatory lending laws or regulations. In addition, dozens of other states and federal legislators are considering enactment of such laws.

The bill would prohibit a wide range of predatory practices, including "flipping" — the practice of refinancing existing loans without any benefit to the borrowers. It also would require high-cost lenders to assess a borrower's ability to make payments before issuing a loan. In addition, the measure would enhance the ability of predatory lending vic-

tims to recover their losses through lawsuits against the original loan issuers and subsequent assignees.

Finally, the bill would make violations subject to the consumer fraud law and provide for additional penalties, as well as an opportunity for lenders to cure good-faith errors. Under the measure, egregious predatory lending violations would be subject to punitive damages and up to 10 percent of the amount financed in fines.

Stanley said a report released by the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice found that African-American residents are 2.5 times more likely than white borrowers to seek sub-prime loans to pay for home improvements or refinancing. While many sub-prime loans are legitimate products, Stanley said the increases sug-

gest that predatory lending is on the rise in urban neighborhoods.

"Many senior citizens are 'house rich and cash poor' — a financial situation that makes them easy prey for the exploitative practices of predatory lenders," said Van Drew (D-Cape May). "Senior citizens who spent their lives to attain the American dream of home ownership should not have their golden years stolen away from them."

The bill is supported by advocates of consumers and senior citizens, including AARP, Citizen Action, ACORN, and the NAACP.

The Senate voted 37-0 to concur with Assembly amendments to the measure. It now heads to the Governor, who may sign it, veto it, or modify in the form of a conditional veto.

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Decreasing anxiety in time of war



By Valorie Burton
Special to the NNPA from The Dallas Weekly

DALLAS (NNPA)—With our nation and allies now at war, there is an added element of concern in our daily lives. Whether you have loved ones deployed in the Middle East (as I do) or fret over the possibilities of terrorism at home, it can be easy to become stressed about more than just the daily challenges of personal and professional life. Here is some advice for decreasing your anxiety level during these unsettling times:

1. **Don't overdose on news.** With multiple 24-hour news channels and breaking news coverage of the war, it can be easy to feel bombarded and overwhelmed. Stay abreast of what is going on, but resist the urge to watch continuously. Doing so can increase anxiety and stress levels.

2. **Pray daily.** Prayer really does change things. It does not always change the circumstances, but it can certainly change your perspective on the circumstances. And that can make all of the difference in the world. Consider these scriptures for prayer and meditation: Philippians 4:6—"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" and Psalm 91:5—"You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day, nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays waste at noon day." Prayer calms you and centers you. Regardless of your opinion on the war, be sure to pray for the safety of our troops and minimizing the number of the innocent lives that may be lost in the cross fire.

3. **Talk about it.** If you are feeling anxious, share your feelings with those you trust. Talking about it can help relieve some of the stress you feel and help you see that you are not alone in the way you feel.

4. **Make "de-stressing" a priority.** Whether it's a funny movie, fun with friends or your favorite past-time, make sure that you engage in activities that help you de-stress. Make this a priority by scheduling time on a weekly basis to do something that makes you smile. In stressful times, it is more important than ever to find time to laugh and have fun. It strengthens your mental and emotional health.

5. **Take positive action.** What could you do to make a difference? One small gesture can help you feel more in control of your immediate circumstances. Perhaps it is your dedication to writing letters or e-mails to a loved one or friend who is deployed in the Middle East, or offering moral support to the family they left behind. Perhaps it is a commitment to learn more about the origins of this conflict so that you are educated about the topic. Or maybe it is simply a commitment to respecting the opposing opinions of others on the issue of war. We all hold different perspectives, but allowing the war to be a source of division among us would be unfortunate.

Take positive action, and use this as an opportunity to embrace tolerance and acceptance.

Valorie Burton is author of "Rich Minds, Rich Rewards: 52 Ways to Enhance, Enrich and Empower Your Life."

PATIENT INFORMATION ABOUT METAGLIP™

(glipizide and metformin HCl) Tablets

WARNING: A small number of people who have taken metformin hydrochloride have developed a serious condition called lactic acidosis. Properly functioning kidneys are needed to help prevent lactic acidosis. Most people with kidney problems should not take METAGLIP. (See Question Nos. 9-13.)

Q1. WHY DO I NEED TO TAKE METAGLIP?

Your doctor has prescribed METAGLIP to treat your type 2 diabetes. This is also known as non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus.

Q2. WHAT IS TYPE 2 DIABETES?

People with diabetes are not able to make enough insulin and/or respond normally to the insulin their body does make. When this happens, sugar (glucose) builds up in the blood. This can lead to serious medical problems including kidney damage, amputations, and blindness. Diabetes is also closely linked to heart disease. The main goal of treating diabetes is to lower your blood sugar to a normal level.

Q3. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO CONTROL TYPE 2 DIABETES?

The main goal of treating diabetes is to lower your blood sugar to a normal level. Studies have shown that good control of blood sugar may prevent or delay complications such as heart disease, kidney disease, or blindness.

Q4. HOW IS TYPE 2 DIABETES USUALLY CONTROLLED?

High blood sugar can be lowered by diet and exercise, by a number of oral medications, and by insulin injections. Before taking METAGLIP you should first try to control your diabetes by exercise and weight loss. Even if you are taking METAGLIP, you should still exercise and follow the diet recommended for your diabetes.

Q5. DOES METAGLIP WORK DIFFERENTLY FROM OTHER GLUCOSE-CONTROL MEDICATIONS?

Yes it does. METAGLIP combines two glucose lowering drugs, glipizide and metformin. These two drugs work together to improve the different metabolic defects found in type 2 diabetes. Glipizide lowers blood sugar primarily by causing more of the body's own insulin to be released, and metformin lowers blood sugar, in part, by helping your body use your own insulin more effectively. Together, they are efficient in helping you achieve better glucose control.

Q6. WHAT HAPPENS IF MY BLOOD SUGAR IS STILL TOO HIGH?

When blood sugar cannot be lowered enough by METAGLIP your doctor may prescribe injectable insulin or take other measures to control your diabetes.

Q7. CAN METAGLIP CAUSE SIDE EFFECTS?

METAGLIP, like all blood sugar-lowering medications, can cause side effects in some patients. Most of these side effects are minor. However, there are also serious, but rare, side effects related to METAGLIP. (See Question Nos. 9-13.)

Q8. WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON SIDE EFFECTS OF METAGLIP?

The most common side effects of METAGLIP are normally minor ones such as diarrhea, nausea, and upset stomach. If these side effects occur, they usually occur during the first few weeks of therapy. Taking your METAGLIP with meals can help reduce these side effects.

Symptoms of hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), such as light-headedness, dizziness, shakiness, or hunger may occur. The risk of hypoglycemia symptoms increases when meals are skipped, too much alcohol is consumed, or heavy exercise occurs without enough food. Following the advice of your doctor can help you to avoid these symptoms.

Q9. ARE THERE ANY SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS THAT METAGLIP CAN CAUSE?

METAGLIP rarely causes serious side effects. The most serious side effect that METAGLIP can cause is called lactic acidosis.

Q10. WHAT IS LACTIC ACIDOSIS AND CAN IT HAPPEN TO ME?

Lactic acidosis is caused by a buildup of lactic acid in the blood. Lactic acidosis associated with metformin is rare and has occurred mostly in people whose kidneys were not working normally. Lactic acidosis has been reported in about one in 33,000 patients taking metformin over the course of a year. Although rare, if lactic acidosis does occur, it can be fatal in up to half the cases.

It's also important for your liver to be working normally when you take METAGLIP. Your liver helps remove lactic acid from your bloodstream.

Your doctor will monitor your diabetes and may perform blood tests on you from time to time to make sure your kidneys and your liver are functioning normally.

There is no evidence that METAGLIP causes harm to the kidneys or liver.

Q11. ARE THERE OTHER RISK FACTORS FOR LACTIC ACIDOSIS?

Your risk of developing lactic acidosis from taking METAGLIP (glipizide and metformin HCl) tablets is very low as long as your kidneys and liver are healthy. However, some factors can increase your risk because they can affect kidney and liver function. You should discuss your risk with your physician.

You should not take METAGLIP if:

- You have chronic kidney or liver problems
- You have congestive heart failure which is treated with medications, e.g., digoxin (Lanoxin®) or furosemide (Lasix®)
- You drink alcohol excessively (all the time or short-term "binge" drinking)
- You are seriously dehydrated (have lost a large amount of body fluids)
- You are going to have certain x-ray procedures with injectable contrast agents
- You are going to have surgery
- You develop a serious condition such as a heart attack, severe infection, or a stroke
- You are ≥80 years of age and have NOT had your kidney function tested

Q12. WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF LACTIC ACIDOSIS?

Some of the symptoms include: feeling very weak, tired or uncomfortable; unusual muscle pain; trouble breathing; unusual or unexpected stomach discomfort; feeling cold; feeling dizzy or lightheaded; or suddenly developing a slow or irregular heartbeat.

If you notice these symptoms, or if your medical condition has suddenly changed, stop taking METAGLIP tablets and call your doctor right away. Lactic acidosis is a medical emergency that must be treated in a hospital.

Q13. WHAT DOES MY DOCTOR NEED TO KNOW TO DECREASE MY RISK OF LACTIC ACIDOSIS?

Tell your doctor if you have an illness that results in severe vomiting, diarrhea, and/or fever, or if your intake of fluids is significantly reduced. These situations can lead to severe dehydration, and it may be necessary to stop taking METAGLIP temporarily.

You should let your doctor know if you are going to have any surgery or specialized x-ray procedures that require injection of contrast agents. METAGLIP therapy will need to be stopped temporarily in such instances.

Q14. CAN I TAKE METAGLIP WITH OTHER MEDICATIONS?

Remind your doctor that you are taking METAGLIP when any new drug is prescribed or a change is made in how you take a drug already prescribed.

METAGLIP may interfere with the way some drugs work and some drugs may interfere with the action of METAGLIP.

Q15. WHAT IF I BECOME PREGNANT WHILE TAKING METAGLIP?

Tell your doctor if you plan to become pregnant or have become pregnant. As with other oral glucose-control medications, you should not take METAGLIP during pregnancy.

Usually your doctor will prescribe insulin while you are pregnant. As with all medications, you and your doctor should discuss the use of METAGLIP if you are nursing a child.

Q16. HOW DO I TAKE METAGLIP?

Your doctor will tell you how many METAGLIP tablets to take and how often.

This should also be printed on the label of your prescription. You will probably be started on a low dose of METAGLIP and your dosage will be increased gradually until your blood sugar is controlled.

Q17. WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT METAGLIP?

This leaflet is a summary of the most important information about METAGLIP.

If you have any questions or problems, you should talk to your doctor or other healthcare provider about type 2 diabetes as well as METAGLIP and its side effects. There is also a leaflet (package insert) written for health professionals that your pharmacist can let you read.

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In clinical trials, most METAGLIP[™] patients experienced *no weight gain*.

METAGLIP[™] combines two widely prescribed type 2 diabetes medicines that treat the primary causes of type 2 diabetes: METAGLIP[™], together with diet and exercise, helps your body release *more insulin*, and works, in part, by helping your body use insulin *more effectively* to lower your blood sugar better than Glucotrol[®] (glipizide). In clinical trials, most patients taking METAGLIP[™] experienced *no weight gain*. If your current management program includes diet, exercise, and Glucotrol, and you're not getting enough blood sugar control, ask your doctor if METAGLIP[™] is right for you.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

METAGLIP[™] (glipizide and metformin HCl) Tablets are not for everyone. In rare cases, METAGLIP[™] may cause lactic acidosis (buildup of lactic acid in the blood), which is serious and can be fatal in half the cases. This occurs mainly in people whose kidneys are not functioning properly. Tell your doctor about your alcohol use because it can increase your risk. You should not take METAGLIP[™] if you: have kidney problems, are 80 or older (unless your kidneys have been tested), are taking medication for heart failure, are seriously dehydrated, have a severe infection, or if you have or have had liver disease. METAGLIP[™] is not recommended for pregnant women. The most common side effects are diarrhea, nausea/vomiting, and upset stomach. Symptoms of hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) such as lightheadedness, dizziness, shakiness, or hunger may also occur.

PLEASE SEE ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT PATIENT INFORMATION ON ADJACENT PAGE

New
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Entertainment News E Briefs

— Kim Bowman

Beyonce dating 50 Cent oh where's Jay-Z



According to U.K. publication, The Sun, word is that Beyonce is now dating 50 Cent. Apparently, Beyonce's friendship with 50 caused a rift between her and Jay-Z leading to the end of their relationship. 50 and Beyonce recently worked on a track together, where they upped the level of their relationship. What also makes 50 more attractive is that he was just given a label deal for his G-Unit Records from Interscope. Expect the G-Unit album to be in stores by year's end.

Jay-Z drops Blueprint 2.1, new Reebok shoe



For those of you who thought Jay-Z's Blueprint 2: The Gift & The Curse had a bit too much filler in the 2-CD set, Jiggaman is cutting some of the fat. Today (April 8), Jay will drop Blueprint 2.1, the best 14 songs from Blueprint 2 plus two previously unreleased bonus tracks. On April 18th Jay drops his new line of Reebok sneakers. The Reebok S. Carter is the first signature shoe ever developed for a non-athlete. The sneakers, a cross between the Adidas Stan Smiths and the classic K-Swiss are available in white with a green sole with an "SC" logo on the bottom. Fans in Philadelphia will get a sneak

peek as Jay will do an in-store appearance on April 17 at an undisclosed location.

Finally on April 29th, Blackground/Universal Records will release Aaliyah's "Miss You" featuring Jay-Z as an enhanced CD single. Also on the disc will be the video for "Miss You" which features DMX, Missy Elliot, Lil Kim and U-God.

DJ Funkmaster Flex pleads guilty to harassment

Funkmaster Flex plead guilty to harassing Power 105.1's Steph Lova in a NYCourt yesterday. By pleading, Flex wasn't charged with any crime, but was cited for a violation. He must serve 35 hours of community service. "Flex is trying to rebuild his relationship with Steph & put this behind him," a spokesperson for Flex told AllHipHop.com. Lova's 5 million dollar civil suit is pending.

P. Diddy disturbs neighbors, starts bad boy dance?

As the new season of Making The Band 2 featuring P. Diddy begins shooting, MTV has rented two town homes in Greenwich Village, NY and neighbors aren't too happy about it. They are complaining of noise, loitering and cigarette butts being left on the sidewalk. On neighbor has even gone as far as starting a petition to have MTV and the show move out of the town homes. Daniel Kohs, owner of the town homes says that the complaints may have to do more with MTV and the show than the noise and loitering.

In related news, word around the industry is that P. Diddy might be venturing into another genre of music along with his new deal at Universal. There is a dance track floating around the industry called "Let's Get It" featuring P. Diddy and dance group, Deep Dish. If the track gets enough of a big buzz in the dance industry, be prepared for a Bad Boy Dance Music division to launch sometime this year.

On April 25 in New Orleans ... K-Ci and JoJo were arrested on tax-evasion charges over the weekend in Raleigh, North Carolina. The brothers, who are accused of failing to pay taxes for shows performed in the state in 1999, 2000 and 2001, were freed on bail Sunday and said they had no prior knowledge of the tax problem. ...

LV to the J.LO



Not only have celebrities taken over every fashion magazine cover besides Italian Vogue lately, but now it seems like they're snatching up the fashion ad campaigns too. Just weeks after the (still unconfirmed) rumor that Christina Aguilera had been selected as the new face of Versace, we hear that J.Lo has been approached by Louis Vuitton about starring in the Fall 2003 campaign. We think all super models should retaliate by becoming rock stars.

KAM'S KAPSULES

BIG BUDGET FILMS



Anger Management (PG-13 for profanity and crude sexual content) Wacky comedy places businessman Adam Sandler in the care of crazy counselor Jack Nicholson as a sentence for a crime he didn't commit.

INDEPENDENT & FOREIGN FILMS

Better Luck Tomorrow (R for cursing, drug use, sex and violence) Boyz in the Chess Club. LA high school drama revolves around a gang of model, Asian-American A-students who secretly sell test answers and illegal narcotics to their dumber classmates.

Ghosts of the Abyss (G) 1 hour, 3-D glasses documentary by director James Cameron chronicles the 2.5 mile deep search for the wreckage of the Titanic in the North Atlantic.

House of 1000 Corpses (R for profanity, sexuality and sadistic gore) Heavy metal rock star Rob Zombie makes his directorial debut with this teen screamer about stranded kids who seek refuge from a storm inside a house which happens to be haunted.

Lilya 4-Ever (R for heavy sex content including rape, expletives and drug use) Street survival saga about the trials and tribulations of an abandoned 16 year-old Russian girl, who follows her boyfriend to Sweden where she is betrayed into prostitution. (In Russian, Swedish and German with subtitles).

Marion Bridge (Unrated) Morose melodrama about a trio of estranged sisters who return to their tiny Nova Scotia hometown to care for their terminally-ill mother while they resume their sibling rivalry.

XX/XY (R for sex, profanity and drug use) Erotic drama about a slick operator who talks a couple of strangers into an ill-fated, menage a trois and their reunion ten years later to try again.

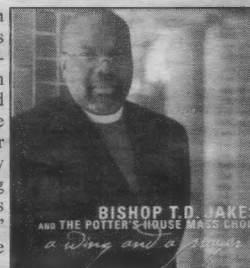
Bishop T.D. Jakes & The Potter's House Mass Choir release new CD "A Wing And A Prayer"

A wing and a prayer. It's an old expression, but in these times when troubles, anxiety and uncertainty seem to be the common currency of a restless, unsettled world, it's a saying that's more relevant than ever. And on their third release, the unfailingly uplifting and inspiring "A Wing And A Prayer, Bishop T.D. Jakes & the Potter's House Mass Choir" deliver 11 powerful songs of hope in the face of adversity.

A classical grandeur carries the timeless message of Richard Smallwood's "His Mercy Endureth" while "It's Already Done" rides atop a joyful modern gospel/R&B groove. "These two songs," says Bishop Jakes, "help lift us as we recognize that God's mercy and grace enable us to make it through the testing times in life."

A smooth flowing choir backs a majestic lead vocal by Tommye Young-West on "A Path In The Sea." "I was particularly blessed by this song," says the Bishop, "because God has brought me through the storm like Peter walking on water and surviving strong winds. I know that He has a path through things that seem insurmountable."

The new CD's closing, title cut - a rollicking, straight-up slice of Sunday morning, stand-up-and-clap Gospel clearly sums up a lot of where Bishop T.D. Jakes has come from, as well as much of what is on his mind and heart these days. "When you hear this song, and the entire album, you'll know what our mothers and fathers meant when they said they made it on 'A Wing and A Prayer,'" he concludes. "It hasn't been easy, but it certainly has been worth it to see what God will do when we believe. I think people will spread wings and fly when they hear the anointing on this CD. I have played it over and over again ... and you know what? ... I made it."



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The White-washing of Smooth Jazz

By Nisa Islam Muhammad
Special to the NNPA from the Final Call

WASHINGTON-In the world of smooth jazz, there are those who sell records and those records that get played on the radio. Typically, in other genres, the artists who sell the most records are the ones that get air-play. Not so with smooth jazz and the artists are crying foul.

"There is a serious lack of Black participation on smooth jazz radio stations," said Marcus Johnson, an accomplished jazz pianist and the head of Three Keys Music. "Smooth jazz radio stations are blocking Black people out of the market."

Johnson has the only 100 percent Black-owned company that is charting music on the Billboard contemporary jazz charts. His partner is Robert L. Johnson, founder of Black Entertainment Television and the first Black billionaire. Together they have such notable artists as Bobby Lyle and Alyson Williams. Despite the success of the company, they have experienced huge problems in getting Black artists airtime on the predominantly White-owned smooth jazz stations.

Their White artists, Michael Lington and Jaared, get a lot of airtime but don't sell records. Bobby Lyle and Marcus Johnson sell records despite the lack of radio play.

There seems to be a real "whitewash" of music in the jazz format, with Black artists seemingly relegated to limbo, explained Johnson. "I need my artists played in Chicago, New York and D.C. where I get an automatic 'No' and we're shut out," he said.

Lyle sees the issue as just a continuation of a historical problem.

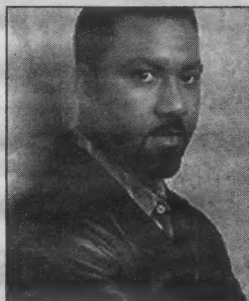
"The attempt to bring White performers to the forefront is nothing new. It's typical of what goes on in the music industry. Michael Lington's getting the stations but not the retail sales that I get. It's a closed fraternity that's not beneficial to the music or the artists," he said.

"It happened in 1920 when Paul Whiteman was called the king of jazz while Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington were more popular. For rock and roll, it was the promotion of Elvis Presley as the king, when Little Richard and Chuck Berry were popular," he told The Final Call.

Ken Tobin, a radio consultant and the operations director at WJZF, Atlanta's first Smooth Jazz station, said it's about control.

"There is one entity that controls what gets heard in smooth

jazz. That's Broadcast Architecture, a consultancy firm. The reason they have so much control is that they've managed to consult and control the major market smooth jazz stations," Tobin said. "They're all about research. That's their claim to the industry. They've developed systems to help stations that have



Marcus Johnson

been successful. With that kind of influence, other radio stations just play follow the leader."

In the early 1990s, smooth jazz emerged as a combination

The attempt to bring White performers to the forefront is nothing new. It's typical of what goes on in the music industry.

of jazz, rock, pop and rhythm and blues. It's considered easy listening music with a contemporary flair.

"This type of music won't disturb the politics of the office," said Final Call White House correspondent Askia Muhammad, who also is a jazz historian and radio personality at Pacifica's Washington, D.C., station WPFW.

"As a radio format, it competes with soft rock and other office music. The obvious symbol of smooth jazz is Kenny G. The advertising and promotion of it is him," Muhammad said. "The Black artists that have had success with smooth jazz are the established artists who had audiences of their own who brought a strong following to the station in exchange for additional success and popularity."

"With the help of Broadcast Architecture, 'the Smooth Jazz format has shown amazing growth over the past seven years. Its ability to bring ratings success in key adult demos is unsurpassed. With core artists like Kenny G, George Benson, Sade and Anita Baker, Smooth Jazz

appeals to multi-cultural listeners."

According to Broadcast Architecture, since 1994, it has assisted more than 20 stations in format flips to smooth jazz. In addition to their ongoing relationships with existing smooth jazz stations, Broadcast Architecture provides a foundation for introducing smooth jazz to new markets.

"Broadcast Architecture is so powerful that they mandate the sound. Their word influences the top markets and the artists' handlers are eager to respond to the manipulation by Broadcast Architecture. In order to get heard, the artists must provide what Broadcast Architecture is looking for," said Tobin. "They also influence what artists get paid, concerts and jazz festivals. The concept behind smooth jazz is to have relaxing music. It has to be laid back, relaxing and non-offensive. They'd rather have a non-offensive tune than one that some like and others don't. This is wallpaper music, background sounds. It works for them but not the artists."

Artists who follow the formula provided by Broadcast Architecture are rewarded with airtime explained Tobin. "Airplay is most important, sales are after the fact."

In the hip hop world, artists such as Master P, Cash Money and 50 Cent decided to avoid those control issues.

"Those folks came along and said we're not going to play that game of control. We're going to play outside of the gym," said Tobin.

These artists began to sell, distribute and promote their own music. Thousands of records were sold literally out of the trunks of their cars.

"They get 100 percent of the profits and not the very small percentage that other artists get from their label," said Mr. Tobin. "These artists own their publishing rights, they distribute their own music and the radio stations are coming to them for promotion."

Movie review Diesel Out for Revenge As "A Man Apart"

Review by Kam Williams

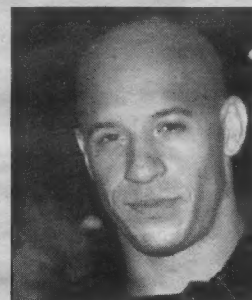
When we last visited Vin Diesel, he was playing the 007-inspired spy, Xander Cage, in XXX. That non-stop, special-effects spectacular raked in over \$200 million in theaters and established Vin as a bona fide box-office star. But because the simplistically-drawn XXX character was basically a cartoonish superhero who was only called upon either to preen or to pulverize, one still had to wonder what would happen when Diesel was asked to exhibit a little vulnerability and a wider range of emotions.

Well, the answer has arrived in A Man Apart, another action adventure, to be sure, yet one with a heart. Here Vin appears as Sean Vetter, a homegrown DEA agent dedicated to getting drugs out of LA's ghettos. He roams the streets fighting crime with his partner Demetrius (Larenz Tate), another native son raised on the rough side of town.

After seven frustrating years, the hard-boiled Vetter has come to realize that arresting the small-fry dealers hanging on the corner isn't even putting a dent in the pipeline of contraband coming from Mexico. Therefore, he and Demetrius decide to try to take down Memo (Geno Silva), the kingpin of the Mexican cartel supplying the pipeline of narcotics to their community.

The story becomes compelling only after the successful sting, when the handcuffed Memo levels a thinly-veiled threat against those who have arrested him. Soon, a sleeping Sean and his wife, Stacy (Jacqueline Obradors), are awakened by bloodthirsty intruders who burst in on them in the middle of the night, guns ablazing.

A Valiant Vetter returns the fire, but is still seriously wounded, while Stacy is slain in the crossfire. He only learns that he has lost the great love of his life, his Rock of Gibraltar, later, when he comes to, attached to tubes and a monitor in a hospital bed.



It is during this interlude that we first get to see the sensitive side of the macho character. And guess what? Vin Diesel proves he can really act, delivering very convincingly in an "anguished man in mourning" montage.

Then, the embittered, disconsolate detective can think of nothing else but getting even, and after a requiem and a little rehab, he's ready to rumble.

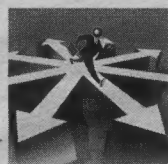
Of course, he enlists the assistance of Demetrius in this endeavor, though the loyal partner hesitates out of concern for his own wife and child.

The plot thickens when the pair learn that the hit had been ordered by the ruthless Diablo, the mysterious head of the new drug cartel which has muscled its way into the business in the wake of Memo's arrest. In fact, they even enlist Memo's help to track down his replacement.

Expect all the familiar staples audiences have come to demand of every high-octane cop drama lately: the stakeout at a strip club for a taste of gratuitous nudity, the pistol-whipping of street-level punks on the way to Mr. Big, shockingly gruesome gore, eye-popping, pyrotechnics, cool car chases and a high body-count. But what makes A Man Apart stand apart is its endearing hero, a huggable hunk any girl could take home to mother.

Very Good (3 stars)

Rated R for graphic violence, profanity, drug content, female frontal nudity and sexuality.



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LEGALS and CLASSIFIEDS

Proposed Renovations for the Housing Authority
 of the Borough of Princeton

Redding Circle Homes

NJ 27-3
 Princeton, New Jersey 08540

JDZA Project No. 02026
 April 7, 2003

REVISED ADVERTISEMENT - INVITATION TO BIDDERS

The following Addendum Number One: Revised Advertisement - Invitation to Bid shall be incorporated into the Contract Documents.

The Housing Authority of the Borough of Princeton (HABOP) invites Construction Bids for the exterior renovation of thirteen buildings at the Redding Circle Homes.

Work shall consist of, but not be limited to:

- Removal of existing cedar siding, trim and building felt.
- Replacement of cedar siding with vinyl siding.
- Replacement of trim with painted metal wrap wood.
- Removal and replacement of gutters and leaders.
- Installation of through-wall air-conditioner sleeves.
- Painting of Doors.
- Replacement of miscellaneous doors.
- Replacement of existing parking area pole lighting and building mounted site lighting.
- Reconstruction of refuse enclosure areas.

It is the intent of the HABOP to award this contract to the lowest responsible bidder.

The Time of Construction from the Notice to Proceed shall be One Hundred Five (105) Calendar Days.

The Plans and the Project Manual may be obtained from the office of Housing Authority of the Borough of Princeton (HABOP)
 50 Clay Street
 Princeton, New Jersey 08542
 Tel. 609.924.3448
 Fax. 609.924.1663

The Contract Documents including Plans, Specifications and the Project Manual may be obtained from HABOP at a (non-refundable) cost of \$75.00 for each set of documents. Bidders are advised to call the Housing Authority Offices before picking up the Bid documents. Payment must be made in the form of a check made payable to the Housing Authority of the Borough of Princeton.

Bidders' attention is called to all provisions of the Instruction to Bidders for Contracts (HUD-5369), the General Conditions of the Contract for Construction (HUD-5370), the Supplementary General Condition and the Construction Agreement all included in the Project Manual.

A Pre-Bid Meeting at the site is scheduled for Tuesday April 22, 2003 at 10:00 AM.

All prospective bidders should attend.

All questions concerning the project shall be submitted to the Architect in writing, facsimile or email. Sealed Bids will be due at 11:00 AM Tuesday, May 6, 2003 at the office of:

Housing Authority of the Borough of Princeton
 50 Clay Street
 Princeton, New Jersey 08542
 Tel. 609-924-3448

At which time all bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

Bids delivered via facsimile machine or electronic mail will NOT be accepted. A hard copy of the Bid is required to be submitted.

A Bid Guarantee of 10% is required (See "Instructions to Bidders").

The Contractor who receives the award must furnish a 100% Performance Bond and a 100% Payment Bond.

HABOP reserves the right to reject any or all Bids, and to waive any irregularities in the Bids.

The HABOP retains the right to award this construction to the lowest responsible bidder it deems is in the best interest of the Housing Authority

Mr. Scott Parsons, Executive Director
 The Housing Authority of the Borough of Princeton.

\$69.30

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Maintenance Worker (Groundskeeper/Janitor)

The Housing Authority of the Borough of Princeton (HABOP) has an immediate opening for a full-time maintenance staff person. Primary responsibilities are: cleaning vacant units, community rooms and other common areas. Maintaining grounds, some landscaping, leaf and snow removal. Experience in groundskeeping, and landscaping preferred but not required. Starting at \$10.50 per hour & benefits with pay increase after six-month review.

Fax resume to: (609) 921-1167 or call (609) 924-3448 HABOP, 50 Clay Street, Princeton, New Jersey, 08542.

All inquiries must be received by April 18, 2003.

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Housing Authority of the City of Passaic
 333 Passaic St., Passaic, NJ 07055
 Attn: Sandra Ortiz

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Bring 10 copies of your resume

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 May 30, 2003.

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Calendar

Community

TUESDAY, APRIL 15

Plainfield — United Trust Community Education Center will offer a workshop for women business owners from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. For more info call 908-753-7364.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16

Plainfield — Plainfield Board of Education will host its executive session meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the Plainfield High School Conference Room, 950 Park Ave.

TUESDAY, APRIL 22

Elizabeth — Union County Drug Court Program presents The Pact with keynote speaker Rameck Hunt, MD, Co-author of "The Pact" at the Main Courthouse, 2 Board St., 5th fl. at 12:30 p.m. For more info call 908-659-3496.

FRIDAY, APRIL 25 — 27

Edison — The Super Pet Expo returns to N.J. Convention Center at Raritan. For more info call 732-417-1400 or visit www.njexpocenter.com.

SUNDAY, APRIL 27

Come and participate in the 17th Annual Lincoln Tunnel Fun Run Walk beginning at USAT&F throughout the south tube of the Lincoln Tunnel from NY to NJ and back. For more info call 1-800-650-7665.

MONDAY, APRIL 28

Jersey City — New Jersey City University presents Emmy Award-Winning Journalists Sandra Guzman at 3:00 p.m. in room 202 of Hepburn Hall, 2039 Kennedy Blvd. Admissions is free. For more info call 201-200-3426.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29 — MAY 4

Newark — UniverSoul Circus is coming to Newark on its 10th Anniversary Tour. For more info call ticketmaster at 212-307-7171.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30

Newark — The City will host its the 16th Annual Observance Ceremony in remembrance of horrors of war, genocide occurring and which have occurred around the world at 12:00 p.m. at Grace Episcopal Church, 950 Broad St. For more info call 973-733-8004.

FRIDAY, MAY 9

Mountainside — The Two Hundred Club of Union County will host its Spring Valior Awards

Luncheon at L'Affaire Restaurant, Rt. 22 Eastbound at 11:30 a.m. For more info call 908-322-2422.

SUNDAY, MAY 11

New York — Celebrate Mother's Day with the world famous Harlem Gospel Choir at B.B. King's Blues Club & Grill with an all-you-can-eat-buffet. For more info call 212-997-4144.

Heartbeat

ONGOING

Belleville — Clara Maass Medical Center will offer complimentary blood pressure screenings every fourth Monday of the month. For more info call 1-800-CLARA-MAASS.

Kearny — West Hudson Hospital offers women's alcoholic anonymous seminar at 7:30 p.m. For more info call 201-955-7556.

Irvington — Irvington General offers women's HIV/AIDS support group at 10:00 a.m. For more info call 973-275-0210.

Newark — WIC Program at UMDNJ offers a variety of support services to participants. Appointments are strongly recommended. For more info call 973-972-3416.

Newark — Beth Israel Medical Center offers free Breast Cancer Patient Support Group. For more info call 973-926-7609.

MONDAY, APRIL 14

Newark — Columbus Hospital will host a memory loss lecture for those living with Alzheimer's in the hospital auditorium from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. Refreshments will be served. For more info call 973-268-1442.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

Belleville — St. Barnabas will host a free seminar on knee and hip pain at 10:30 a.m. For more info call 973-450-2213 or 973-284-4974.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23

East Orange — The Blood Center of NJ will offer a community blood drive at East Orange General Hospital, 80 South Munn Ave from 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30

Belleville — Clara Maass will host a free seminar about pain and treatment at 10:30 a.m. For more info call 973-450-2213.

ONGOING — APRIL 31



FRIDAY, MAY 2— State Theatre of New Brunswick presents Barry Manilow Copacabana Musical at 8:00 p.m. For more info call 732-246-7469.

Newark — A computer based 12-week GED course covering subject areas: Writing, Reading, Social Studies, Science and Mathematics, with a curriculum which covers life skills, job readiness and computer instruction, will be offered from Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at La Casa de Don Pedro, 39 Broadway. For more info call 973-481-4713.

Business

ONGOING

Newark — The Women's Center of Essex County College is sponsoring a series of seminars, support groups during Spring 2003 Semester. For more info call 973-877-3395.

TUESDAY, APRIL 15

Newark — SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) presents a workshop "Starting and Managing Your Business" from 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. at SCORE Office, 2 Gateway Center 15th fl. For more info call 973-645-3982.

MONDAY, APRIL 21 — 22

New Brunswick — Rutgers University will host a business and medical ethics conference with special guest speak Governor James McGreevy. For more info call 973-353-5879 or visit <http://pruethics.rutgers.edu>.

THURSDAY, APRIL 24

New Brunswick — New Jersey State Bar Foundation will host a free seminar on "Landlord/ Tenant Rights" from 7:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. For more info call 1-800-FREE-LAW.

MONDAY, MAY 5

Newark — City News and City Marketing Group presents its 5th Annual City Business Expo 2003 at the Newark Airport Marriott

from 7:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. For more info call 973-642-4400.

Artz

ONGOING

Newark — Maize Restaurant presents Sweet and Low Thursdays featuring vocalist Denise Hamilton from 5:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. For more info call 973-639-1200.

ONGOING — MAY 18

Millburn — The Paper Mill Theatre presents the play Camelot with music by Frederick Loewe. For more info call 973-376-4343.

SUNDAY, APRIL 12

Jersey City — Jersey City Museum invites you to join its Associate Curator for a tour of several new gallery shows in Chelsea and lunch. Event is free for contemporaries members. For more info call 201-413-0303 ext. 3115.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23

New York — SOB's presents Brand Nubian in concert at 9:00 p.m. For more info call ticketmaster at 212-307-7171.

THURSDAY, APRIL 24

New Brunswick — State Theatre presents The Temptations in concert at 8:00 p.m. For more info call 732-246-7469.

THURSDAY, MAY 1

Asbury Park — 50 Cent and The Clipse in concert at the Convention Hall at 7:00 p.m. For more info call ticketmaster at 212-307-7171.

FRIDAY, MAY 2

New Brunswick — The State

Theatre of New Brunswick presents Barry Manilow's Copacabana musical at 8:00 p.m. For more info call 732-246-7469.

Morristown — Community Theatre presents The Boys Choir of Harlem in concert at 8:00 p.m. For more info call 973-539-8008.

SATURDAY, MAY 17

New York — Erykah Badu performs in concert at the Apollo Theater in Harlem at 8:00 p.m. For more info call ticketmaster at 212-307-7171.

FRIDAY, MAY 30

New Brunswick — The State Theatre presents Saturday Night Fever The Musical for three performances at 8:00 p.m. For more info call 732-246-7469.

Religion

ONGOING

Newark — Greater Service Fellowship Church invites you to Sunday morning service at 9:00 a.m. and Wednesday Bible study at 7:00 p.m. If you have questions, come get the answers. For more info call 973-848-1711.

SUNDAY, APRIL 13

Newark — Israel Memorial AME Church, 54 Lincoln St, invites the public a the annual Palm Sunday service with host Bishop Zedekiah L. Grady at 10:00 a.m. For more info call 642-6048.

SATURDAY, MAY 17 — 18

Newark — Newark Symphony Hall presents The McDonald's GospelFest 2003 with special guest Donnie McClurkin, Vickie Winans, Cissy Houston, etc. For more info call 973-643-8009.

SATURDAY, MAY 10

Summit — The Concord Singers will present their Spring Concert at the Calvary Episcopal Church on Woodland Ave at 7:30 p.m. For more info call 973-514-1412.

SATURDAY, JUNE 7

New York — McDonald's Gospelfest 2003 comes to Madison Square Garden at 7:30 p.m. For more info call ticketmaster at 212-307-7171.

Mail your calendar events and photographs at least two weeks in advance to:

**City News Publishing
111 Mulberry St., TH-C
Newark, NJ 07102 or
Fax to: 973.642.5444**

Essex County children help protest Headstart changes



Several hundred protestors including many young children demonstrated in front of Newark City Hall in opposition to the Bush administration's proposal to end direct federal funding of local headstart programs. Instead, funds would be allocated from the Department of Education to local states whom they believe could better coordinate the funds with other state funded programs.

Protestors want the funding to remain with the

Department of Health and Human services so that the funding of other services like parenting classes, and other services for parents. They also believe that this move would add to layers of bureaucracy making in more difficult to meet goals.

Children from throughout Essex County participated including Montclair and Bloomfield chanting as they carried their sign of protest "Headstart works, Head Start works."



U of Michigan Admissions

Continued from page 1

the university's provost to give 20 points to a student at his or her discretion.

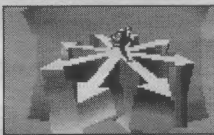
A student from Michigan's largely White Upper Peninsula can pick up 16 more points—10 for being a Michigan resident and six for coming from an underrepresented county in the state. If that student is poor, that's a total of 36 points.

Further, extra points are awarded to students from an underrepresented state, for being the child or stepchild of a Michigan graduate, for demonstrating leadership and service skills, for personal achievement and for writing a good essay. Yet, critics of affirmative action are only pouncing on the provision that considers race and ethnicity.

Often lost in the debate is how classes are selected. Universities look at a variety of factors when trying to assemble a class. Because they don't want all students to come from the state of Michigan, they award extra points to students from other state. They try to come up with a mix of students that will afford everyone in the class an opportunity to learn from people different from him or her.

In trying to create this mix, admission counselors might bypass a student with better grades and higher test scores to favor another student who might bring more varied experiences to the class. The premise is that students learn as much from one another outside the classroom as they learn directly from professors.

In fact, the White students who brought the suit against the University of Michigan had higher test scores and GPAs than some Whites who were accepted. Instead of challenging the admission of those students, however, conservatives have chosen to attack the handful of African-Americans accepted. And that's truly outrageous.



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7:30 - 8:30	Power Networking Breakfast
8:30 - 9:15	Power Breakfast Kick-off
8:00 - 2:00	Exhibits
9:45 - 12:15	Workshops
12:30 - 2:00	Competitive CITYBUSINESS Awards Luncheon

WORKSHOPS

9:30 - 10:45	Access-to-Capital
9:30 - 10:45	Franchising
11:00 - 12:15	Developers' Forum
11:00 - 12:15	Opportunities in NJ's Cities

Recognizing the vital role of small business and minority ownership to the economy of the cities and state, CITY NEWS, along with corporate sponsors invite you to attend the **5th Annual CITYBUSINESS Expo 2003**.

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